

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the following claims.

Claims 1-17 (cancelled)

18. (currently amended) A semiconductor device comprising:

a silicon substrate;

a patterned dielectric layer on the substrate; and

a bulk metal layer on the dielectric layer, the metal layer comprising a first metal and a second oxidized metal, wherein the second metal is present in an amount sufficient to cause precipitation or a phase change in the metal layer and to increase the hardness of the metal layer.

19. (previously presented) The device of claim 18 wherein the second metal is a solute that improves the hardness of the metal layer.

20. (currently amended) The device of claim 18 wherein the second metal is ~~beryllium~~ aluminum.

21. (previously presented) The device of claim 18 wherein the first metal is copper.

Claims 22 – 25 are cancelled

26. (currently amended) A semiconductor device comprising:
- a silicon substrate;
  - a patterned dielectric layer on the substrate;
  - a bulk metal layer comprising copper and beryllium.
27. (previously presented) The device of claim 26 wherein beryllium is a finely dispersed solute rich phase.
28. (previously presented) The device of claim 26 wherein beryllium is part of a large grain precipitate.
29. (cancelled)